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IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [00004] with the following:

[00004] Other body contact medical devices, such as urinary catheters, stents, in-dwelling access ports, sensors, prosthetics, artificial cartilage, implants, and the like, may be coated or otherwise be partially constructed of a hydrophilic polymer. Protein deposition on such devices may be a first step in the formation of a layer of living cells. Depending on the specific application, protein affinity may be desirable or undesirable. In many cases, the protein layer and subsequent layer of living cells may interfere with the operation of the device. In other cases, it may be desirable to have these cells for a protective or connective layer, as in the case of biological scaffolding.

Please replace paragraph [00011] with the following:

[00011] In another aspect, the invention is a method of processing an item at least partially formed of a hydrophilic material to produce an increased protein affinity. The method preferably includes the formation of insoluble ionic materials in or on the item during processing. In further preferred and optional embodiments, the method further includes hydrating the item in an aqueous solution containing multivalent cations (such as a calcium chloride solution in water), processing the item in the presence of a buffer, and flushing the buffer from the item using an aqueous solution or water. In an example embodiment, the method comprises hydrating the hydrophilic material in calcium chloride solution so that the calcium diffuses into the hydrophilic material matrix, and tumble-polishing of the item in a polishing slurry in the presence of a buffer such as a phosphate buffer.